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URGENT

Crown Point man at center of 'sextortion' case enters guilty plea to child porn production

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Jonathan Miano, The Times

HAMMOND — A Crown Point man at the center of a “sextortion” case involving a North Carolina girl entered a guilty plea this week in U.S. District Court admitting to producing child pornography, court records show.

Adam Russell Hegyi, 31, was indicted in July 2017 on accusations he produced child pornography featuring an underage girl and a second underage female victim.

In the first case, he is accused of stalking the North Carolina girl online and releasing nude photos the girl previously sent to him via multiple social media phone applications.

In a plea agreement filed Thursday, Hegyi said he will plead guilty to two counts of producing child pornography.

On each count, he faces 15 to 30 years in prison, a fine of \$250,000 and five years to a lifetime of supervised release.

In exchange for his plea, prosecutors would agree to drop four other charges of receiving, transferring and distributing child pornography and online stalking.

Digital images of at least three other girls and one boy who appeared under age 18 were discovered during the investigation into Hegyi and discussed in court last year.

According to the criminal complaint, Hegyi, between Jan. 1, 2015, and June 2, 2017, used social media outlets — including KiK, Snapchat, Skype, Instagram, Facebook and FaceTime — to communicate with a girl beginning when she was 12.

Hegyi and the teen allegedly engaged in sex acts in video chat and exchanged nude photos after the two met online through Omegle, an online chat service that pairs random users together, court records show.

In October 2015, the teen became distraught and filed a police report with the Rowan County, North Carolina, Sheriff's Department and turned over her cellphone as evidence.

At least seven images of Hegyi's genitals were found on her phone, along with photos the teen had sent to Hegyi and screenshots of a Skype video conversation, court records show.

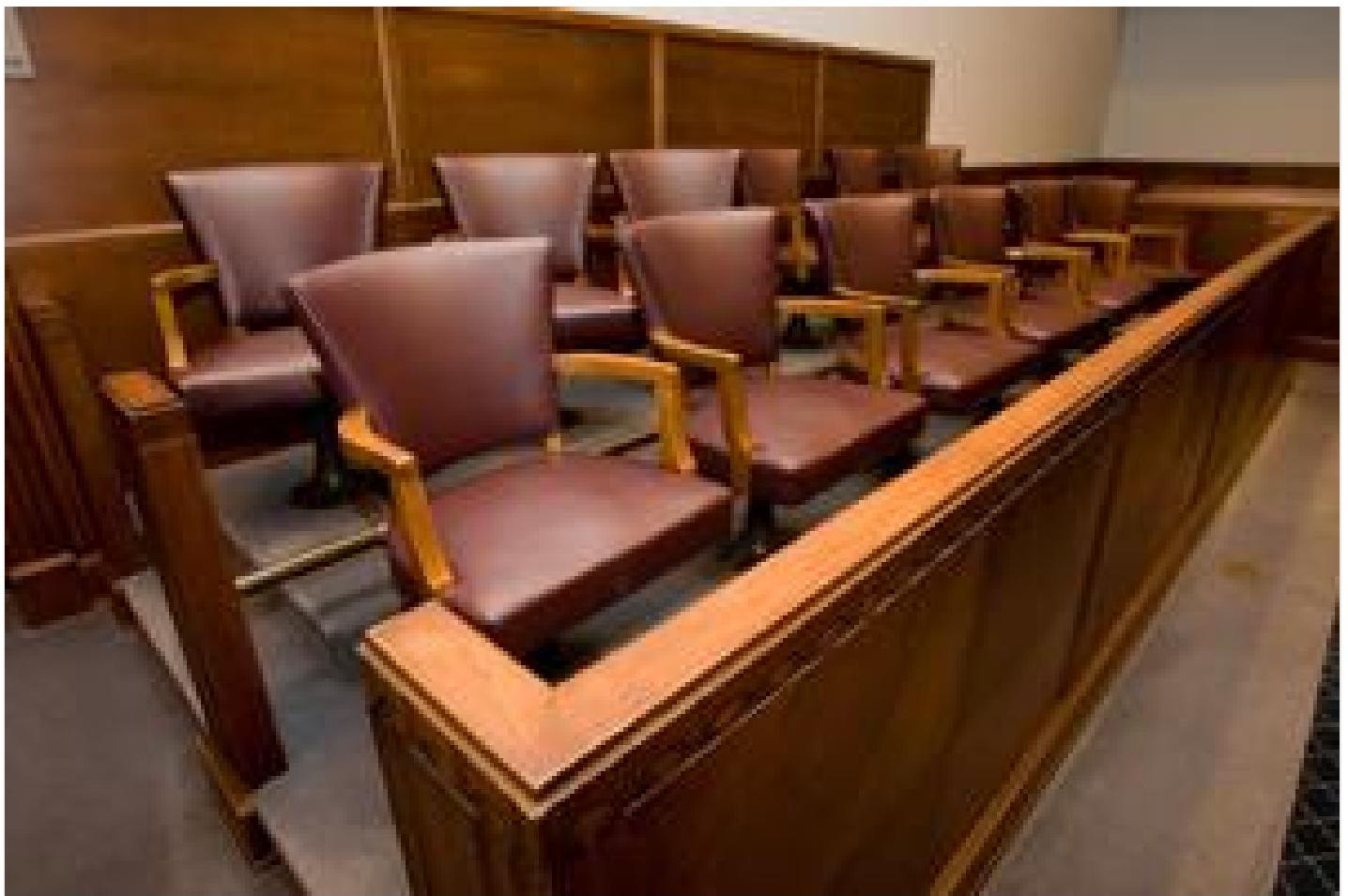
Even after the girl contacted police, Hegyi allegedly continued to contact her — at one point threatening to rape and kill her and her family, documents show. Hegyi also allegedly encouraged the girl to kill herself, court records show.

Eventually, the girl's mother received a nude photo of the girl via Facebook messenger, court records state. That same day, the girl's father received a Facebook message purporting to be from Hegyi, alleging his daughter constantly texts him and that he has the family's home address.

Then, on May 30, Hegyi went even further by sending multiple nude photos of the girl to classmates, according to court records.

Police later determined four Facebook accounts allegedly utilized by Hegyi stemmed from the same computer IP address after they submitted emergency disclosure requests to the social media giant.

A change of plea hearing is set for 11 a.m. Sept. 12 before U.S. District Court Judge Joseph S. Van Bokkelen.



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